

Harold Clurman: A CRITIC'S CREDO II

THE NATION

September 21, 1964 . . 35c

Predictions of a Southern Politician

Frank E. Smith

Why Youth Riots

The Adolescent Ghetto

Frank Musgrove

Postal Savings

AMERICA'S POOREST BUY

Ralph Lee Smith

'A Mother's Kisses'

Review by Nelson Algren

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LETTERS

The elemental instincts

Cambridge, England

Dear Sirs: The American race riots now exploding had their fuses lit in the conditions of American life. But many years ago an Englishman, writing about England, explained:

When the conditions of social life are such that the individual may be excluded through no unfitness of his own for co-operation . . . we are brought face to face with the conditions of primitive ages. And if you force him back upon the elemental instincts, one of two things will happen. Either, if the individual is weak through physical deterioration or incapacity to combine with his fellow outcasts, he will be crushed and killed by society and putrify about its holy places; or, if he has indomitable life and vigour, he will revert to the argument of elemental forces: he will turn and explode society.

Sidney Olivier was writing (*Fabian Essays*) about white workers in England, in 1888. He not only accurately described the total insecurity of most contemporary American Negroes; he also penned the kind of total moral purge that few of us are willing to face. How many of us are willing to supersede institutions now immoral, because useless and mischievous, by institutions which shall re-establish the elementary conditions of social existence and the possibility of the corresponding morality—namely, the opportunity for each individual to earn his living?

Irving Richter

One continent divisible . . .

Vancouver, Canada

Dear Sirs: As a once very unhappy American now living contentedly in Canada, I offer the following comments on David Cort's "Canada Under Old Glory" (*The Nation*, Aug. 10):

For all its weaknesses, Canada's parliamentary system is vastly superior in efficiency and responsiveness to public opinion and public need to the creaky, utterly reactionary, eighteenth-century governmental structure in the United States. . . . I know of no Canadians familiar with the U. S. Constitution who would agree to any form of political union with the United States as presently constituted. . . .

The U. S. is the least democratic of all countries which can reasonably be described as democracies; its elections are sham battles between ideologically identical parties, conducted under election laws which effectively (although, of course, not formally) pre-

vent even the weakest competition from minority parties. In Canada all political parties, including the despicable little Communist Party, have absolutely equal access to the ballot. . . . Insofar as the extent of political freedom consists in the right and opportunity to choose between real alternatives, the Canadian voter is palpably freer than the American voter. . . . Does Mr. Cort seriously believe that Canadians would willingly subject themselves to such a situation? . . .

The penetration of the Canadian economy by American capital is a serious problem which worries many Canadians, but I know of no Canadian who wishes to "solve" the problem by dissolving Canada. . . .

The probability of Canada's joining the U. S. as ten new states is nil, but the existence in North America of two national states is geographically and economically irrational. I am astonished that Mr. Cort did not mention a possibility which could receive serious attention in the future, viz., the founding of a completely new nation in North America—a nation which would be neither Canada nor the U. S., nor a merely mechanical amalgamation of the two—under a thoroughly democratic constitution and with new political and economic institutions. . . .

D. D. Todd

Noisy trap

Redlands, Calif.

Dear Sirs: According to the news our military planners in South Vietnam missed the boat by a wide margin. They were trying to trap some 2,000 guerrillas and so ferried a regiment of Vietnamese troops by the use of ninety-six helicopters to a point 30 miles north of Saigon. The Vietcong knew they were coming and prepared an ambush. But the helicopters were tipped off by rifle fire and landed at another place. The Vietcong fled and all but four of them escaped. We lost a pilot. One wonders how ninety-six helicopters, all flying in the same direction, could surprise anyone; the noise they would make could have been heard all the way to the Great Wall of China!

C. W. Swenson

Backlash

Detroit, Mich.

Dear Sirs: In issue after issue, you publish articles and letters which suppose that there will come a time when Negroes and whites will be fully, and perhaps happily, integrated.

I have had occasion to make a tour of many states recently and to talk to many white people, especially those in the lower and middle economic

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The Nation, Sept. 21, 1964, Vol. 199, No. 7
The Nation is published weekly (except in July and August, when biweekly) by The Nation Company and copyright 1964 in the U.S.A. by The Nation Associates, Inc., 333 Sixth Avenue, New York, N.Y., 10014. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. Tel: CH 2-8400.

Subscription Price: One year, \$10; two years, \$18. Foreign and Canadian postage: \$1 extra per year.

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classes. They are beginning to realize that when and if integration is instituted on a broad scale it will fall upon them, and they will not have the economic wherewithal to protect themselves against racial integration and its many ill effects. . . . I hear white people say that they "see what it's all about now." I read in their attitude a grim determination that will surely delay implementation of integration, North and South, for a long, long time.

D. Lane

Lots of Kids

The pattern everywhere was the same—teen-agers on the rampage at Hampton Beach, N.H., Monterey, Calif., Seaside, Ore., and in the Bronx. They were having one big romp before going back to school—or just going back home, since some of them are neither students nor workers. Nor is this a peculiarly American phenomenon; they are just as destructive in Brighton, England, and Canada had a riot in Grand Bend, Ont.

It is all very bad for business. Even when they are not fighting, the teen-agers are not in the market for much except beer and hamburgers. They eat only enough to fight, and sleep on the beaches. They come to a resort when the word is passed that there is going to be a brawl. The adults hear about it too, and stay away.

This is sad. For years the business community has rejoiced in the population explosion. It guaranteed prosperity, it was said, by its sheer magnitude. First the babies would have to be raised, then they would marry and buy ranch houses and furniture, and make more babies. But today, the motel owners whose windows were smashed are crying the blues. They do not take the long view.

Official reactions are also predictable. Mayors and police chiefs of resort towns are bursting with wrath. Monterey was invaded by black-jacketed motorcyclists from Southern California, that Sodom-Gomorrah on the other side of the Tehachapi. "These are not kids," the mayor protested. "They are old enough to know better. They're a crummy looking lot, with their beards and unwashed appearance. We don't want them back."

But probably they will come back, precisely because they are not wanted. Providentially, the American Psychological Association was holding a convention in Los Angeles just when the riots occurred. Dr. Jerome S. Bruner, the Association's new president, thought that the outbursts "probably reflected a feeling of disengagement from society because of the complexity of modern life—a desire on the part of the demonstrators to express a feeling of control over their own destinies." But, Dr. Bruner added, these youngsters belong to the same generation that has taken such a big part in the civil rights movement, the Peace Corps and other good works.

True, one cannot indict a whole generation. We can be sure of only two things. One is that if a nation's goals fail to challenge a large part of its youth, that part will express itself in ways that do challenge—if only for a weekend. Second, there will be more outbreaks from time to time, very likely on an even larger scale. One has only to look at the statistics. A total of 3.7 million Americans will celebrate their 17th birthday this year—a million more than in 1963.

Each year's crop will be larger than the preceding year's; by 1974, 17-year-olds will number 4 million or more. Even if only 1 per cent of them are inclined to raise Cain, the state troopers are going to get a lot of exercise on Labor Day weekends to come. These census estimates lend urgency to Frank Musgrove's discussion of youth as a society in exile (see p. 137).

Operation Sea Orbit

In a stimulating new pamphlet, *The Demilitarized World*, Walter Millis persuasively argues the proposition that demilitarization and the establishment of a supra-national authority may be nearer than we think. The reason he gives is that great armament complexes are becoming increasingly senseless. To put them to use would invite mutual annihilation. It may well be so; all the same, the great powers still think it necessary to exhibit new additions to their formidable arsenals. A case in point is the cruise of the nuclear-powered task force—Operation Sea Orbit—now in progress. Task Force One consists of the aircraft carrier *Enterprise*, the frigate *Bainbridge* and the cruiser *Long Beach*. The novelty of this flotilla is its complete independence of support by supply ships, or port facilities. Everything needed is on the ships. They can move about 800 miles a day, which is certainly not aircraft speed but much faster than oil burners can move; and their self-sufficiency does away with the risk that tankers may be torpedoed at rendezvous points, or en route. The *Enterprise* can cruise around the world at high speed three to five times before her reactors need refueling. At a leisurely pace, the task force made it from Gibraltar to Karachi—11,000 miles—in three weeks; if there had been reason for haste it could have cut the time by a week.

If we must put on displays of power of this kind, then it is well that they should be staged with the restraint that has characterized Operation Sea Orbit to date. The demonstration has been on a selective basis, aimed at the people who count. Besides Pakistan, the ships made "under-way visits" to several neutral or friendly African countries: Morocco, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Union of South Africa and Kenya; also Australia and New Zealand. Before returning home to Norfolk, the flotilla will look in on Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil. At each port of call the practice has been to stay well offshore, to pick up a few selected officials with planes from the *Enterprise*, fly them out to the flotilla for a few highballs and a fire-power demonstration, and fly them home again. If the officials were not impressed by 100 aircraft and nuclear bombs cramming the *Enterprise's* hold, they must have been deaf, blind and dumb. It is more likely that they understood that the Minutemen and Titans could remain peacefully in their homeland silos, while *Enterprise* and her escorts could selectively pulverize

any given area of any country which had given Uncle Sam offense. There has been no such ballyhoo as characterized our debut as a major naval power in 1907-09 when Theodore Roosevelt sent the Great White Fleet around the world. Nor has the cruise been used as was the earlier one to stimulate the phobias of domestic jingoes and would-be imperialists. But the fact that such a formidable display of power was thought to be advisable on any terms should serve as a warning that we still live in a world that is far from being demilitarized.

Barry on the Beam

Not even Barry Goldwater can be wrong all the time. In calling for an end to the draft he joins *The Nation*; he is five or ten years late, to be sure, but his collaboration is welcome. *The Nation* printed so many editorials and articles denouncing the draft that the editors became tired of seemingly talking to themselves, but then some of the mass magazines started saying the same things and now, behold, here's Barry.

The Johnson Administration does not come out too well in the exchange on the draft. First, the rebuttal squad said, in effect, Thank you, Senator, glad to have you with us. Then the President himself gave the word, and it was that the question of ending the draft should not be a campaign issue. He spoke, he said, "without reference to any individual." A likely story! In an electoral campaign all of Johnson's utterances must have some reference to the individual running against him, and everything Goldwater says will refer to the President. Nor does it help that General Eisenhower wanted the draft out of the 1956 campaign. It belonged in that campaign, it belonged in the 1960 campaign, and it will belong in every campaign until it is finally abolished, which by all indications will be soon.

The case against the draft is that it is unfair, unnecessary, outmoded and militarily meaningless. The last reason is one which would naturally appeal to Goldwater; the Air Force doesn't need the draft and has never been keen about it. The Navy likewise does not need to dragoon young men into wearing its uniform. The Army is the only service that has any substantial interest in the draft. If it cost more to keep the Army up to strength without the draft, it would be money well spent. But at the risk of committing heresy, *The Nation* suggests that perhaps the Army could get along just as well with fewer soldiers.

Drugs and Doctors

The ethical drug business has an advertising/sales ratio of 10.5 per cent, only the fourth highest in American industry, but fantastic in terms of expenditure per prospect. About \$750 million is spent every year to persuade 180,000 physicians to prescribe the products of some sixty drug companies. Every possible dodge is used, from seductive advertising in medical journals to free cocktail parties and including, of course, the visits of an army of detail men. As the late Pierre R. Garai

put it in *Drugs in Our Society* (Paul Talalay, ed., Johns Hopkins Press): "... perhaps no other group in the country is so insistently sought after, chased, wooed, pressured and downright importuned as this small group of doctors who are the *de facto* wholesalers of the ethical drug business." Moreover, after the Kefauver investigation, conditions are worse rather than better.

As a writer and connoisseur of medical advertising, Mr. Garai deplored its extravagances, frequent dishonesty and endless repetitiousness, but pointed out that from the industry's standpoint it has one supreme virtue: it works. *American Druggist* rejoices that the doctor's pen is flowing more freely than ever, and new prescriptions and refills are booming. Some of these drugs are lifesavers, but many are worthless, not a few are actually harmful, and occasionally one is dangerous. Dr. Dale G. Friend, professor of medicine at Harvard and head of clinical pharmacology at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston, says flatly that there is no such thing as an absolutely safe drug. The economic damage is not small either. Partly because of overpromotion, overdevelopment and overcompetition, many drugs are overpriced and a disproportionate share of the burden falls on those least able to sustain it—the sick, and especially the elderly sick.

What can be done? Mr. Garai recommended that the physician arm himself against "confusion, ignorance and error" by subscribing to *The Medical Letter*, a fortnightly publication which provides a continuing evaluation of drugs, especially new and intensively promoted ones. The *Letter* does for the physician what *Consumer Reports* does for the general buying public; in fact, its managing director, Arthur Kallet, was for some twenty years the director of the *Reports* organization. Mr. Garai is outraged by the fact that after more than four years of publication, the *Letter* numbers less than 30,000 subscribers, or only about one physician in six. Is it any wonder, he asks, that "drug advertisers should be unimpressed by the professional maturity of the bulk of their audience or that campaigns for ethical drugs should sometimes seek to manipulate physicians rather than communicate with them?"

A similar point is made by Dr. Louis Lasagna, in "Problems of Drug Development" (*Science*, July 24). Dr. Lasagna is associate professor of medicine and associate professor of pharmacology and experimental therapeutics at Johns Hopkins and serves on the *Medical Letter* advisory board. He makes a second suggestion which the medical profession and the foundations that dispense money for research (including some supported by drug houses) would be wise to take up. In the majority of medical centers, he asserts, clinical pharmacology and clinical toxicology are neglected programs. The National Institutes of Health should take action to remedy this lapse in the generally impressive performance of American medical education. At present, the help that is provided by federal sources is actually diminishing. "It is tragic," says Dr. Lasagna, "that education in pharmacology is declining at

a time when it is most needed." If a phalanx of skilled and resolute pharmacologists were available to call to order the gullible sections of the medical profession and the unscrupulous sections of the drug industry, few would be hurt, many would benefit.

The \$1.8 Million Taxi Ride

The National Bureau of Standards says a mile is 5,280 feet long, but developments in Los Angeles suggest that a mile is as long as a cab company wants it to be. In 1959, George Worster, owner of Yellow Cab's Los Angeles franchise, decided that a city-approved fare increase was not bagging the desired revenue. Worster recalls that his maintenance chief then suggested that the fare meters be speeded up. "I authorized the meters to be changed," Worster told the Los Angeles City Board of Public Utilities and Transportation recently. The board estimates that the faster tick has brought in \$1.8 million in overcharges during the last five years. In 1962, Worster stepped out as owner, a move which, in effect, neatly obscures responsibility and liability for the recently discovered meter tinkering. The present franchise owner, Rex Taylor, told the board, "We thought your inspectors were inspecting the meters thoroughly and would have detected a small error." It would be comforting to find that a vigilant city inspector finally did uncover the "small error," but such is not the case. A Yellow Cab competitor, Segal Cab, tattled to the board. After learning that the last large-scale check-up on meters by city inspectors occurred in 1947, the board suspended the general manager of the Department of Public Transportation.

Observing that meter inspections across the nation are about as thorough as those in Los Angeles, the recent National Conference on Weights and Measures recommended that all cities enforce the meter tolerances set by the National Bureau of Standards. The California Taxi Cab Association assails these tolerances as "unrealistic and oppressive," a description which more aptly fits a \$1.8 million taxi ride.

Politics and Jim Crow

Frank Smith's account in this issue (p. 132) of the mainspring of Southern politics—the close connection between the one-party political system and the Jim Crow social system—provides excellent background, by a man who has himself been a Southern politician, for understanding the current agony of the racist Dixiecrats. Since the 1948 election, there has been a trend in the South toward a two-party system; it shows up in the popular and electoral vote in Presidential elections, in the presence of nine Southern Republican Congressmen, and in a growing number of Republicans in local office. For example, in Lynchburg, Virginia, three of the city's seven councilmen are now Republicans. Theoretically, both parties in a two-party system could be equally dedicated to the preservation of Jim Crow but, practically, it is impossible. Sooner or later one party or the other, or possibly both, will

be driven—or tempted—to court the Negro vote; in fact, it has already happened, here and there.

Against this background, Goldwater confronts the Southern racists with an insoluble dilemma, for he offers them a clear choice and that is precisely what they do not want. Given his voting record and his views, they must vote for him, but every Goldwater vote in the South furthers the trend toward a two-party system. If the Republican nominee were Rockefeller or Scranton, the racists could say a plague on both houses and ignore the Presidential election; but they can't do that this year. Nor will any of the old strata-gems work. A third-party movement, of the kind Strom Thurmond headed in 1948, would simply siphon votes from Goldwater. A rival Democratic slate—"Democrats for Goldwater"—would have the same effect. The unpledged-electors gimmick, they now discover, is probably unconstitutional.

Caught in this dilemma, the Mississippi Democrats have selected electors loyal to the national ticket, while announcing that they will vote for Goldwater. At the same time, Gov. Paul Johnson offered the delegates—many of them officeholders—the cheerful assurance that they could vote for the Goldwater-Miller ticket without endangering their status in the state Democratic Party. But the assurance is as worthless as Confederate currency. For example, if the Goldwater-Miller ticket should win in certain Southern states, the Republicans would probably add to the total of the seats they hold in Congress. The effect of this would be to reduce the Dixiecrat representation which has already been weakened through reapportionment. It could also cost the Dixiecrats the chairmanships of certain key committees, thereby further diluting their influence as a bloc. Then there is the threatened loss of federal patronage and contracts to worry about and, beyond that, the specter of active competition by Republican nominees for every city, county and state office. Southern Republicans, like Republicans anywhere, are ambitious; as the party grows in the South it will offer competition at every level.

In Mississippi the Democrats have set up a committee to study how they can eat their cake and have it too—that is, how they can be Goldwater Republicans while, at the same time, retaining the Democratic monopoly of local and state offices. The problem, fortunately, is insoluble. In the unlikely event that Goldwater should make a sweep of the South, it would simply undermine the Jim Crow system by strengthening the position of the Republican Party. On the other hand, should President Johnson sweep the South or any substantial part of it, the influence of the moderates in the Democratic Party will be greatly strengthened, while the racists—the Wallaces, the Paul Johnsons—will be locked out. In this painful vise, the smart, i.e., moderate, Dixiecrats will keep their moves covert and their mouths closed. But the only choice that Goldwater gives to the extremists—and it is one that may appeal to his somewhat flamboyant view of life—is ceremonial political suicide.

The Southern Politician Frank E. Smith

Mississippi has the largest proportion of Negroes of any state in the Union, and since the Civil War it has always been on the lowest rung of the national economic ladder. These two factors are not unrelated, but they have not had directly equal influence on the politics of the state. Through the years, race has been a far greater force than poverty. And wherever race has been significant in politics, the most extreme position has historically prevailed. Mississippi politics is accordingly a good index to Southern political patterns.

From its admission to the Union in 1817 to its attempted secession in 1861, the state's economic and political leadership devoted itself to the creation of an agricultural economy and to the maintenance of slavery, the labor pool with which the economy became one of the most prosperous in the country. In the Reconstruction period between 1865 and 1890, that leadership reasserted itself, to re-establish the plantation system and ultimately to control its politics. The foundation was the same, only the semantics were different. Until 1865 the name was slavery; after 1865 it was "white rule," or the Southern way of life, or States' rights.

The corresponding historic dates for each of the Southern states are different, but the pattern, for all practical purposes, was identical. The economy of any region has a significant effect on its politics; this is not a characteristic peculiar to the South (neither, for that matter, is racism; the difference lies in the fact that in the South racism is more determined, more virulent and more overt). A population composed of a large number of almost totally uneducated Negroes, plus a sizable number of either uneducated or ill-educated whites, lent itself to the development of two forces. The first was a landowner-banker-business group, the Southern leadership, which materially benefited from a cheap labor force and thus had a pressing reason to maintain the *status quo*, irrespective of the mo-

ralities. The second was what has come to be known as the poor white group, a populace which included not only the small white farmer but the crafts and trades and service people as well. In the main unlettered and unskilled, this bulk of the white population was led to believe, by fact and by manipulated fear, that the freed Negro was his competitor and thus his enemy. Turned upon the Negro by economic forces, excluded from the ruling society, the less solvent white rationalized a status for himself by assuming superiority to the Negro, and the creation of white supremacy was complete.

There isn't a great difference between the propaganda used to justify the segregation laws enacted by Southern legislatures following Reconstruction and the so-called States'-rights doctrine spread by Governor Wallace earlier this year. Both were designed to persuade the white man that the Negro would ruin him financially. Given any degree of economic or social insecurity, there's a good chance that such persuasion will reach its target. It did in the 1890s, and it does today, and it makes little difference whether the target is a low-income Polish group in Milwaukee or the low-income Anglo-Saxons in Maryland's money-pinched bay-shore counties or the Deep South's even more money-pinched rural areas. The appeal is the same, and it works. It works better in the Deep South because for successive generations white Southerners have been assured of their superiority by the press, the bar, the church and the politicians, each to its own interest.

From this foundation, conformity has been the common denominator in Southern Congressional politics since the Civil War. Traditionally it has been popular to picture the typical Southern Congressman as the willing tool of various reactionary economic interests—big planters, big business, courthouse political rings, et al. This has often been true, but in most cases the controlling element has been simply that the politician in a one-party system has to make some attempt to please every interest that has an influence with the electorate.

Through the years much of the

racial agitation among Southerners in the Congress has been a vehicle to cover attacks on liberal economic legislation. Seventy-five years ago the Southern Bourbons used the race issue to defeat the Populist movement; the Southern Democrat-GOP coalition of the past generation was cemented with the GOP promise (and occasional delivery) of assistance against civil rights measures. The greatest strength of the race issue, however, was in its use to defeat or handcuff Congressmen or would-be Congressmen who supported federal programs to invigorate the economy of the South.

The political influence of farm migration and industrialization in the South has varied. Urbanization has focused some attention on the need for federal legislative remedies for urban problems, but the widespread growth of medium-size towns has largely been a conservative influence. Villages are dying out, but small towns have generally grown in population, and most of them are strongholds of anti-federal philosophy. Unionization in the South has not kept pace with industrial growth, and many of the union workers who are organized, including large locals of the United Automobile Workers and the electrical workers, have given vocal and effective support to blatant racist politicians, despite strong progressive leadership of these unions at the national level.

The Southern states are the poorest in the country and receive heavily disproportionate assistance from federal grants-in-aid and welfare programs. Despite this, the fiercest opposition to these programs in recent years has come from Southern Congressmen. One reason is that the chief beneficiary, the Negro, has been disenfranchised. Another is that many of the programs have been made unpopular with even the impoverished whites by being described as primarily of benefit to the Negro, or likely to promote integration.

One of the national tragedies resulting from this greater tragedy of the politics of race has been the loss of a broad federal aid-to-education program in the years after World War II. During the thirties and forties the majority of Southern

Frank E. Smith, a director of the Tennessee Valley Authority, and a former member of Congress, is author of Congressman from Mississippi, to be published by Pantheon this month.

Congressmen were committed to federal aid to education. If this same degree of support had held, the program would have been enacted into law under President Truman, with a resulting better trained and educated generation today.

This shift in sentiment on education was only one example. Beginning in the late 1930s, with minute but measurable Negro progress in economic and political rights, the iron grip of a political pattern designed to resist any change in the racial *status quo* began to tighten everywhere in the South. It appeared first as opposition to some of the New Deal economic measures, and developed as various administrative concessions to Negroes were made by President Roosevelt in the midst of the war effort. After President Truman's civil rights commission made its report in 1947, the racial issue became the dominant consideration in every Deep South state, and in the great majority of the House districts from the old Confederate states.

Since 1947, there has been no leeway for Southern members of Congress on race; they have been tied irrevocably to the views of those who sponsored and supported the Dixiecrat movement of 1948. The leadership of the Southern bloc in Congress has not been confined to the open Dixiecrats, of course, but because racial extremists established the Southern position on civil rights in the Congress, a rigid posture of opposition to any change in race relations has been forced upon members from the region. Congressmen from border areas were not as completely under its domination, but they also felt its influence.

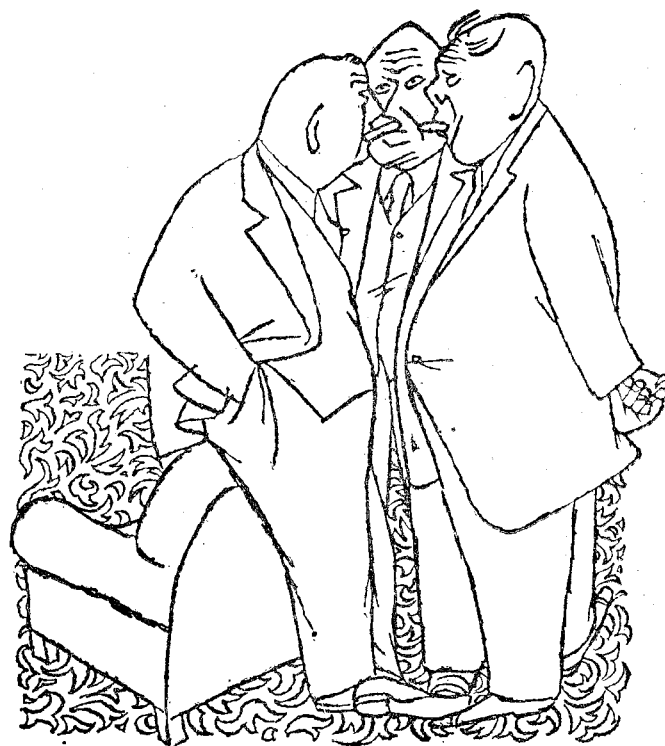
Most of the Southern members are personally opposed to civil rights legislation, in one degree or another. A few are rabid racists; most would be middle of the road if they could. But as white racists organized in the South under the impetus of the 1954 school-desegregation decision, it became politically impossible for any Southern member of Congress to be identified as a moderate. The troubles of those who refused to sign the so-called "Southern Manifesto" made this clear, and each new election further emphasized the point. Many of the men, moderate in conscience, retained their seats only at the price of conducting racist campaigns.

Thus for twenty years the Southern legislator has had to accept the fact that both his constituents and his colleagues considered that his chief responsibility in the Congress was unceasing opposition to any advance in Negro civil rights through federal legislation. Occasionally Southern members privately raised the view that civil rights legislation, with a gradualist approach, written with Southern cooperation toward the goal of acceptance and compliance by the white South, would help to end the divisive abrasions within the Democratic Party, to say nothing of meeting the legislative responsibility of the Congress. The one open Southern effort in this direction was the constitutional amendment to repeal the poll tax, and it was turned down by civil rights proponents as a violation of their concept of legislative remedy. (The amendment was not passed until President Kennedy supported it in 1962.) Proposals for any other type of gradualist rights legislation met violent opposition from the controlling Southerners, and none were made, even privately, after 1950.

Civil rights legislation has been passed by the House of Representatives without any crippling amendment whenever it came to a vote. The strategy of the Southern leadership has been to prefer strong bills, thereby insuring that Southerners in the Senate would prevent pas-

sage. For the proponents of civil rights legislation, the problem was primarily to draft bills that were not too strong for the sometimes reluctant support of Republicans, or Northern Democrats officially on the line for civil rights but privately not very aggressive about it. Working on this combination, the Southern Senators were able to block any civil rights measures prior to 1957. When Lyndon Johnson promoted the strategy that changed the 1957 bill to a voting-rights measure, the Southern Senators did not resist to the point of cloture because they realized that the right to vote was the one issue on which not enough Northern and Western Senators would help them. The same consideration prevailed in 1960. In the House Southern members were denied any practical voice in shaping the bills, but Southerners had an important role in the Senate, as was evidenced subsequently by some of the difficulties encountered in trying to use the federal courts to implement Negro voter-registration drives in the South.

The 1964 civil rights bill was a different story in the Senate. It went through the usual process in the House, where the bill was revised to gain the full support of Republican leaders, but the Southern Senators gambled that they could prevent cloture. If they had any doubts about their strategy, Governor Wal-



Bryson; Harpers.

lacc's forays into the North completely boxed them in, since it gave their constituents illusions of success in the fight against the whole bill and made it almost impossible for the Senators to retreat anywhere along the line. One result of their intransigence was the adoption of some amendments that lessened the impact of the bill on the North without reducing its severity for the South. The fabled legislative acumen of Southern Congressmen has been consistently thwarted in the field of shaping civil rights legislation, largely because they are unable to undertake any compromise. Their canniness in preventing legislation other than the 1957, 1960 and 1964 civil rights bills has probably been overrated, for the minority dedicated to complete opposition to civil rights has rarely been matched by a majority with any real dedication to passing the legislation. The Kennedy-Johnson effort of 1963-64 was the first occasion when the full resources of a national administration were thrown into the fight.

The 1964 Civil Rights Act probably marks the last time that major opposition to such legislation will be built entirely around Southerners. There will be no overnight change of attitude, but the pressures for rigid conformity will be less and less. With voting restrictions against Negroes confined to fewer and fewer states, Southern Senators from states with no restrictions are going to be in a poor position to take up the burden for two or three Deep South states.

Undoubtedly, there will be moves in the next few years to simplify the procedures under which the fed-

eral government can intervene to establish and protect the voting rights of Negro citizens in the South. Congressional resistance to such legislation will probably stem from the Southerners, but beyond that civil rights will not be a regional political issue. The resulting freedom from the strait jacket of politics dominated by race will bring about a vastly different pattern of Southern Congressional representation as we move into the next decade. The changes may not be discernible from one Congress to the next, but they will be readily apparent over a broader span of time. The court decisions requiring equal sizes of Congressional districts will have important effect, but the greatest changes will come from the combination of Negro voting and, if it withstands present attack, the court decision requiring reapportionment of state legislatures.

Racial demagoguery will carry less of a political premium, and there will be continued acceleration of the growth of a two-party system. Democrats from the cities and the poorer small towns and rural areas are likely to resemble more and more their Northern liberal counterparts. The Republicans who gain office are likely to inherit the philosophical support of those who have been taught that all federal power is evil.

For the South as a whole, racism as a political force has probably reached its peak and begun the long decline. It will be felt, however, in subsidiary issues like foreign affairs for years to come. Too many voters have developed their entire concept of these issues in the light of their alleged influence on Ne-

groes in the South. Long after all legal discrimination is ended, even in Mississippi, Southerners will look askance at a world subject to African influences. Racists have defined every form of international cooperation as a device to establish "African" or "Mongolian" control over the United States, and this has been a major factor in the widespread growth of the isolationist philosophy now apparent in the South. Dr. Charles O. Lerche, Jr., defines the new Southern attitude as "unilateralism"—the denial of any community of American interests with the world outside. In the past decade many more Southern Congressmen have become unilateralists in their voting, despite long traditions of Southern internationalism. A thin majority of Southerners has continued to vote for foreign aid, but only with the full knowledge that it is a highly unpopular issue with their constituents.

Despite these handicaps, Southern politics will be more and more free in the years to come. There are challenges in the next decade to produce great governors who can carry forward state programs to eliminate educational and economic inequalities, with Negroes participating as full partners in both the planning and realization of the programs. There are opportunities in this same period for young men to build national careers in the Congress without the millstone of racism to preclude their full participation in national decisions. The obstacles may still be formidable, but there is before the rising generation of Southerners a challenge to greatness that has not been equaled since the time of Jefferson.

Afghanistan: The Canny Neutral . . . Louis Dupree

Contrary to popular belief, Soviet aid to Afghanistan did not begin in the 1950s, but closely followed the 1927 visit of Afghan King Amanullah (1901-29) to Moscow. However, the success of the Marshall Plan in Europe greatly impressed the Russians, and post-World War II Soviet economic doctrine has emphasized that mass economic aid, coupled with a massive influx of technicians, will affect all institutions in a society, and gradually lead

the recipient nation to a point of total economic dependence, followed automatically by political domination. In line with this doctrine, Afghanistan, after 1955, became the fourth most expensive guinea pig in the Russian economic penetration experiment; only India, the United Arab Republic and Indonesia receiving more money from the Soviet bloc.

The Americans have attempted to counter, and Afghanistan of late

years has become a kind of "economic Korea," with the Afghans themselves banking on their traditionally famous powers of bargaining to come out on top — still devel-

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The NATION

oping, still neutral and still independent.

The Afghans almost made a mistake, because fundamentally the Soviets are right. A nation does not accept technology without ideology. A machine or a dam is a product of a culture, and even the method of manufacture (union shop, sweat shop, Socialist shop) becomes important. The way a nation markets its machines, the way people learn to operate the machines, and the way machines are used (private farms, collective farms, state farms) cannot be ignored as the machines enter the second country. Machines and technology do not exist in separate vacuums. People serve as the action component, and the way they teach other people to use these tools becomes a part of the recipient culture's way of life. In a major sense, the American programs in Afghanistan have been effective; just by *being there*, they helped prevent the success of the pat, eminently feasible Soviet scheme. Probably the most important American programs in Afghanistan relate to education, and so nine-tenths of the American-aid iceberg sits below the surface, invisible to the journalistic eye. English has become the major non-Afghan language, and language is a most essential cultural tool. It spreads ideology as well as technology simply by the *way* it expresses ideas, both concrete and abstract. The depth of the penetration of English can be gauged by the fact that all embassies in Kabul must, by Afghan regulations, publish their daily news bulletins in their *own* languages or in English, because the Afghans realize that such bulletins published in Persian or Pashto (the two major languages in Afghanistan) would be excellent propaganda vehicles. So the Russians and Chinese and most other embassies publish their bulletins in English. (Naturally, the French still use French.)

The Big Gamble sailed along on a relatively even keel until March, 1963, when Prime Minister Daoud (first cousin of King Mohammad Zahir) voluntarily—though hesitantly—stepped down at the peak of his power, and the king appointed a commoner, Dr. Mohammad Yusuf, talented Minister of Mines and Industries, as Prime Minister. Other cabinet changes further liberalized the power at the top. For

example, no member of the royal family today holds a cabinet post.

The Middle East seldom witnesses such a peaceful transference of power, and the change caught many Westerners by surprise. But the most surprised group appeared to be the Soviets, who had wrongly (along with some Westerners) considered Prime Minister Daoud to be pro-Soviet. Soviet embassy officials left for Moscow immediately for agonizing reappraisals. For about a week after the change, Americans and other Westerners with Soviet friends found themselves rebuffed. Russians failed to show up at private parties, which they had previously attended freely and with evident pleasure.

Very quickly, however, it became apparent that the shift in prime ministers related directly to Afghan-Pakistani relations, and indicated no change in Afghan foreign policy in the cold war. In August, 1961, Afghanistan had closed the border in a fit of national pride, when Pakistan closed consulates and trade offices in Jalalabad and Qandahar, and the Pakistan Government ordered Afghanistan to shut its offices in Peshawar, Quetta and Pachtin. All legitimate trade across the border ceased, and the Soviet transit route and Afghan-Soviet trade assumed increased importance. Most observers agreed that either President Ayub of Pakistan or Prime Minister Daoud (both Pathans, and few Pathans of different tribal origin trust one another) had to go, and President Ayub was not about to do so. King Mohammad Zahir and his advisers realized that the border with Pakistan had to reopen if Afghanistan was to maintain its economic — and political — flexibility vis-à-vis East and West. So Prime Minister Daoud stepped down, a new government came in and, with the Shah of Iran as mediator, Pakistan and Afghanistan agreed to restore diplomatic and economic relations. The border reopened in the early fall of 1963.

When it became obvious that Afghanistan planned to maintain its neutral policy, Soviet friends once again began to have normal intercourse with Western friends. Subtle changes did occur, however. Official Afghan sources indicated that the military build-up had reached a plateau, and that the government planned a leveling-off process. The Afghan military also

broadly hinted that it would welcome the opportunity of more pilot and staff officer training in the United States. Hundreds of iron-curtain scholarships offered to various Afghan ministries were unclaimed, and many Afghan students literally threw tantrums when ordered to study in the USSR.

The Soviets appear to have lost their gamble: massive aid (including military aid), thousands (estimates vary, some up to 5,000 to 7,000) of iron-curtain technicians made no appreciable impact in either the political or ideological spheres. In the process, however, both the Afghans and Soviets learned a lot about each other — and themselves. The Afghans discovered, as have many developing nations, that the Soviets are not perfect automatons. They do make human mistakes. If it is any comfort to Americans, one highly placed Afghan exclaimed: "Why, we found the Russians are just as stupid as Americans." Several Soviet projects have fallen behind schedule because of inadequate surveys.

Many Afghans condemn Americans for living too well, with many servants, high living allowances, and a commissary which often stocks instant rice in a country with some of the world's finest rice, and canned fruits and nuts in a country which, according to many connoisseurs, has the best fresh fruit and nuts in Asia. But the same Afghans also condemn the Soviets for living too poorly, and look on in amazement as Soviet technicians and their wives scramble with the Afghans to buy second-hand American clothing in the Kabul bazaar. In addition, few Russian technicians speak fluent Persian or Pashto (another folklore of Soviet infallibility) and many genuinely feel disturbed on being ordered home. Like most of their American counterparts, they have never had it so good.

But — and this is an important but—Soviet bloc (including Czechs and Poles), American and West German technicians (the Germans in Afghanistan make money while making friends, something which seems beyond most other nationalities) have contributed mightily to Afghanistan's decade of development.

Over the years, U.S.-USSR com-



petition has evolved into *de facto* cooperation, although neither the Americans nor the Russians express it in this manner. In fact, both appear to be exceedingly uncomfortable when anyone mentions the possibility. The Soviets assist the Afghans in building roads from the north, the U.S. from the south. These roads must join together at some point, and Afghan-Soviet-American technicians must cooperate at the juncture points. The USSR aerially photographed and mapped the northern one-third of Afghanistan; the Americans (under a Fairchild contract), the southern two-thirds. The aero survey-mapping projects overlapped and American-Soviet teams established mutually recognizable bench marks and check points on the ground. The Soviets helped construct the landing strip and buildings for the new Kabul Airport; the Americans installed the communications equipment. Many conferences between the two nations' technicians meshed the construction details. At the Ministry of Planning, Afghan planners, United Nations planners, Soviet planners and U.S. planners (from Robert Nathan Associates, an international development consulting firm in Washington, D.C.) sit in on conferences at the ministry and spend one another's money in overall projects. Czech engineers advise the Afghans on coal-mining operations near Pul-i-Khumri. North of

Pul-i-Khumri, in the Dara-i-Suf area, near where the Russians drill for oil, American mining engineers advise the Afghans on another coal-mining operation. Finally, American pumps fill the tanks of Soviet bloc and American trucks with Russian gasoline. None of these joint endeavors came about voluntarily, and most of them occasioned bitter arguments between the participants, but the result has been American-Russian cooperation in Afghanistan.

In addition, Afghanistan has become one of the few areas in the world where Americans and Soviets can mingle socially outside the official party circuit. The central point for social meetings among the international set is the International Club (formed in the mid-1950s), with its swimming pool, tennis courts, play area for children, dining room and bar. Members must be approved by a membership committee, but only the physical size of the club limits the membership, which includes representatives of all the foreign communities except the Communist Chinese. The Afghan Government limits the percentage of Afghan members, but a member may bring in any number of guests, and this adds to the cosmopolitan atmosphere.

The club holds a dance almost every Thursday night, often using tapes, but sometimes with a live

band made up from members of the foreign colony. Friday (*Juma*) is the Muslim sabbath or weekly holiday. Dancers occasionally wander on the podium between sets and play the musical instruments. The Russians particularly enjoy playing popular American and European songs of the thirties and forties in an archaic ragtime style. Much alcohol flows, but trouble seldom occurs. Rarely, a former Nazi will harangue the younger West Germans now working in Afghanistan with tales of his glorious past as a soldier of the Third Reich. The young Germans themselves bodily remove the ranter from the scene, apologizing to all.

Not too many Russians or Americans belong to the club. The Russian technicians remain a clannish group of blue-collar workers with a maximum of technical, a minimum of liberal, education, much like their American counterparts and, on the whole, both groups prefer private in-group parties which make them feel more comfortable than the relatively sophisticated air of the International Club.

Russian and American technicians who do break out of their own circles find how surprisingly alike their opposites are in temperament and outlook, when common means of communication can be found. The similarity between Russian and American personality types has not escaped psychologists, sociologists and historians, who point to parallels in Russian and American development, such as the Russian and American drives to the Pacific, our frontier societies, and the treatment of native peoples within our national boundaries.

Some lasting friendships have begun over Pilsener beer, vodka or Scotch at the International Club. Perhaps Russians and Americans can be socially more friendly on neutral ground. Americans in Russia and Russians in America must constantly be on the defensive or offensive as the situation demands.

Both the United States and the USSR began overseas programs of economic and military aid to gain friends and to counter each other's moves. Neither succeeded in Afghanistan, so both should realistically look at their accomplishments and failures. When someone asks me, "Who's winning in Afghanistan? The Americans or the Rus-

sians?," I must in all honesty answer, "Neither — the Afghans are winning." Perhaps this is as it should be.

Possibly American and Russian aid to the developing nations of the world will continue to create feelings of independence and neutrality, not of dependence and cold-war alliance. Possibly meaningful economic and geographic units will form loose confederations of a Common Market sort, and become regional, viable economic zones with internal political stability.

I think this represents the key to the whole situation. As long as the United States actively and intelligently participates along with the Soviets in underdeveloped countries, and as long as both take advantage of whatever spheres of activity are open to them, and to which they

feel they can make a contribution, the recipient countries will not "go Communist." If the United States pulls out for whatever reasons, the Soviets obviously have an open field, as in Cuba.

In my mind, then, a neutral country is a Western country, for in the classic Soviet theory of world domination, a neutral nation exists only as a transitional phase leading toward eventual Soviet domination. It may be hoped that the USSR under Khrushchev is moving away from the classic idea and genuinely believes coexistence to be possible and desirable. If so, Afghanistan has been a successful experiment in foreign aid from both Russian and American viewpoints. Lessons learned here might possibly be applied elsewhere, modified, of course, to peculiar regional requirements.

The possibility that the Soviet Union will ever make an overt military move into Afghanistan appears remote. A military move on the part of a frustrated USSR would destroy the already tenuous pose of aid without strings so carefully nurtured by the Khrushchev regime; and if coexistence is to be the way of life, what better place to prove it than remote but easily accessible Afghanistan? The past decade of American-Russian experience in Afghanistan may indicate that economic aid does not necessarily mean political domination, or even preference. Soviet and American moves since the March, 1963, change of governments have been mild and cautious, but a bold new Afghan Government moves toward broad constitutional, political and social reforms.

Why Youth Riots

The Adolescent Ghetto Frank Musgrove

The modern "problem of youth" is part of the wider population problem that confronts the world today. In advanced, industrial nations, and now increasingly in underdeveloped countries, the older generations are employing ingenious stratagems to stem the tide of adolescents which threatens to swamp their entrenched positions. After 30, we all assume the stance of a latter-day Canute.

The mature can no longer assume with any confidence that a half of all who are born will die before puberty, that the remainder of the males will be decimated by major wars before they are 25, and that many of the more enterprising among the residue will have scattered to far-flung frontiers of opportunity before they are 30. Today the social, sexual and economic threat of the uprising generation must be faced head-on.

While there are thus unique aspects to the contemporary confrontation of the generations, "the problem of youth" is not new. It is simply more desperate. In the early

days of the classical industrial revolution, when youthful skills and quickness of mind and limb were at a premium, the young entered early into adult earnings, responsibilities and positions of seniority. Their elders, handicapped by obsolete knowledge and skills, were often appendages to their children. Nevertheless, devices for regulating and softening the entry of the young into the world of adults were often ingenious and even ruthless. We no longer take the drastic measures which medieval and renaissance society adopted with a proportion of their young males (often those destined for long training and eventual high responsibility); but we still behave as if a large proportion of the young were eunuchs. The protracted education and theoretical continence required of our most gifted and favored young men would be tolerable only to a generation of geldings.

One of the most effective means of disabling the young and at least postponing their head-on competition with their seniors is protracted formal education. The evidence that such provision is often damaging to the personality and irrelevant to the economy is unlike-

ly to halt the vast expansion of formal education for young people into their middle and late 20s. Our colleges are increasingly depositories for superabundant youth, agencies for neutralizing the threat of an insurgent generation.

Many of our problems today are a product of the very progress we have made. The young survive to manhood on an unprecedented scale; and they are lusty survivors, better fed, more physically fit, and probably more advanced in brain maturity than at any time in human history. But their elders also survive to an unprecedented degree; and modern welfare economics and systems of taxation make it difficult for them to drop voluntarily into early retirement. At a time when the young were never so well equipped with formal job qualifications, there were never so few voluntary or involuntary dropouts from the ranks ahead of them. Economic expansion can sometimes generate additional opportunity, so that the problem of succession is masked, but in many fields these gains are offset by automation. The extension of formal education and training for ever more adolescents and young adults may be a sign,

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not that society is desperately in need of their enhanced skills, but that it is suffering from a surfeit.

The Western countries have made prodigious steps over the past century in their protection of the young. This protection may have curious and often unfortunate side effects. It usually results in keeping the young off the labor market and out of adult concerns for as long as possible. If they go to work we "protect" them increasingly with (under-paid) apprenticeships, which again underline their less-than-adult standing and are often quite unnecessarily long. Apprenticeship and training institutions can be used for the protection of the mature rather than the young. As our institutions for the advanced or specialized training of the young proliferate, I believe it is time we asked: are these measures for their protection or for ours?

The result of our increasingly elaborate "protection" schemes is that young people are extruded from adult society. They constitute a segregated, zoo-like population, belittled by the very measures intended for their advantage, humiliated, self-disparaging, by turns apathetic and hostile. It is often assumed that the young have withdrawn themselves from the world of their seniors, in protest against its values and authority. The evidence is not that they have withdrawn but that they have been kicked out: that in their teens their most ardent desire is to qualify as adults and engage in adult affairs. This becomes ever more difficult for them as the legal age for entry into many pursuits and occupations becomes ever higher, and as the statutory and conventional age of school leaving rises everywhere.

We are fortunate if this segregated, largely futile world—futile because, "in their own interests," its denizens can make no direct contribution to the vital and central concerns of society—is invaded by nothing worse than "beatlemania," marginal delinquency and sexual experimentation. After all, at the height of their physical and perhaps intellectual powers, the young have to do *something*.

Before the age of 20, marriage is the major avenue of advance from the teen-age zoo into the world of adults, and this perhaps accounts for the unprecedented



popularity of early marriages. (The desire for marriage is not, of course, simply the desire for sex. At a time when sex was never so accessible to the young outside marriage—at least uncommercially—marriage itself was never so popular.) This remaining avenue to adulthood is vigorously though often unavailing obstructed by parents. In England there are twice as many divorces in marriages which have lasted twenty years or more as in those which have lasted four years or less; but the myth that young marriages are particularly prone to disaster persists as one of the most useful weapons in the parental armory. In view of the grudging attitude to youthful marriage, the hostility and disparagement which surround it, and the often precarious finances of underpaid professional workers in their youth, the remarkable thing is not that some of these marriages fail but that so many survive.

The segregated world of youth is created and furnished by (adult) writers and tailors; the mass media define and perpetuate a socio-cultural ghetto for sub-adults. Special institutions are created solely for the young. In England the famous Alberman Report on youth of 1960 fostered the youth club movement (ages 14 to 20) and recommended specially trained and paid represen-

tatives of the adult world to supervise and oversee it. Adult institutions (political, social and cultural) have their youth departments with only the sketchiest liaison to the parent bodies.

It is probably true that the mature are not to be trusted; that they cannot be expected voluntarily to behave with decency and humanity toward the young; that youth must be preserved from the contamination of close contact with them. This would certainly seem to be the lesson of history. But it is one of the oddities of our day that we approve close social contact only between people of almost exactly equal age; that we regard as potentially dangerous, even immoral, any association between the young and adults except kinsmen and certified neuters such as priests, schoolteachers and youth leaders. The sociologists then make the great discovery that the young are to be found in "peer groups." At least one reason for the rejection of the young and their exile into a self-contained and if possible antiseptic limbo is our distrust of *ourselves*.

The population explosion which we have seen throughout the world since the end of World War II is aggravating the problem of transition from adolescence to adult life in countries at quite different levels of social and industrial progress. Unemployment in America and the depressed areas of Britain (like the Northeast, Merseyside and South Wales) is disproportionate among the younger age groups. America's "war on poverty" has been particularly concerned with the plight of people aged 16 to 21. In five years' time, if present trends persist, a million and a half in this age range may be unemployed. Unemployment among men of 18 to 25 is already running at approximately twice the rate which obtains in the labor force as a whole.

In America and Western Europe (notably, perhaps, in southern Italy) the young men who have had least education are most often unemployed. But that is not necessarily because they are "unemployable"; it may be because we use our educational systems as gigantic grading devices which, in times of labor abundance, automatically debar the least educated from serious consideration. In the developing countries of tropical Africa young people who

have enjoyed a Western-style education are often the most difficult to absorb into the economy. With some 40 per cent of their people under the age of 15, the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America recoil before a rising tide of youth. Accelerated programs of education on the Western school model have made a difficult position highly dangerous. In Ghana the Workers' Brigade was established in 1957 as an emergency measure to mop up educated young men: to place them in a segregated, controlled situation on the margins of society. As an agricultural army they could be held under a discipline which reduced their danger to the social order.

Although adolescents are willfully and skillfully excluded from adult status at least partly because they are a threat to the security of the elders, their segregated and semi-autonomous status is elaborately justified in psychological and educational terms (which often bear a striking resemblance to the terms once used to justify the exclusion, subordination and inferiority of adult women). A special "psychology of adolescence" has been developed, and it helps to create what it describes.

Many vocations in the past have called for a long and difficult preparation in youth. The knight was unlikely to master the range of military, social and administrative skills required of him before the age of 21. What is relatively new is the notion that *all* the young must pass through a long period of dependency and social probation.

However inappropriate or even grotesque, we have now assimilated all young people, whatever their social level or future employment, to the condition of knighthood.

The adolescent is a Franco-American invention. Rousseau drew the original blueprint in the eighteenth century; Stanley Hall added the superstructure more than a century later. But even as he wrote, Hall was acutely aware that American adolescents were refusing to conform to the theoretical specifications, that they were far more adult than in theory they could be. For the past two centuries, whenever two or three adults—particularly of the middle classes—were gathered together, they have lamented the "precociousness" of the young, the discrepancy between the theory and the facts of adolescent behavior.

The young are older than we think. And as they become ever older (a girl today menstruates ten months before her mother did), we attempt to make them ever younger. We certainly succeed in making them more irresponsible. The advanced industrial nations have been remarkably successful in ignoring biology.

The second major justification of an ever more protracted period of dependency and social probation for all is the alleged "complexity of modern society." In fact, for all their technological advance and administrative sophistication, industrial societies are ever simpler for their average members, and that is the overwhelming majority. Specialization in employment and the professionalization of local services have radically reduced the range and

complexity of skills required by the average citizen. As jurors, tax assessors, men-at-arms, experts in animal and child psychology and physiology, our forebears perhaps needed a longer preparation for adult status than they commonly enjoyed. Today the individual can survive not only adequately but well with a remarkable paucity of skills and knowledge. That is not to say that his level of competence over a wide range of activities could not be raised; but it is nonsense to claim that the complexity of the modern world makes this imperative. Complexity is a subterfuge—at best a rationalization—for keeping in prolonged dependence a great and rapidly growing army of modern youth.

We have created a largely unreal division between adolescents and adults; we have propounded solutions for "the problem of youth" which only exacerbate the problems they should solve. Two things above all are urgent—a more realistic, or simply a more accurate, "psychology of adolescence" which recognizes the real competence and maturity of most young people at 16, 17 and 18; and a generous reordering of our social institutions to recognize and reward their talents and abilities.

For the psychological health of individual adolescents, and for the greater social health of society, the young need to come into adult institutions as and when they are able, and on terms that accord with their actual capacities rather than their chronological ages. As a society we draw far too many (usually erroneous) inferences from the ac-



cumulation, or lack of accumulation, of years.

Extended higher education needs close scrutiny of its real purpose and effects. If it genuinely enhances the power of the young, it should be expanded; if it is really a device for prolonging their dependence and inducing immaturity, it should be scaled down. Too many of our educational and quasi-educational institutions are mechanisms for manufacturing adolescents where none naturally exist. And—to add disaster to disaster—academic success is thought to indicate promise in spheres where it is wholly irrelevant. An advanced education, in

which success goes commonly to the somewhat neurotic and the more than somewhat introverted, should not be a prime requisite for a man whose subsequent career will involve solving the actual predicaments of real people, face to face, rather than handling ideas about people and formulas which embrace an abstracted aspect of a faceless multitude.

The young will cease to be a nuisance and a danger to their elders when they are no longer seen and treated as an outsider population, threatening and hostile. Their advance into the adult world should not be unnecessarily delayed. Many

educational programs should be drastically pruned (although a minority of students destined for the learned professions and higher scientific work must endure an ever longer training. These are the future underprivileged—the men without the leisure which automation has brought to everyone else). The young should no longer be subjected to an extensive “protection” which is in fact an insult. More men in their 50s, 40s and even their 30s should be able to retire on adequate pensions to make way for young people to offer their best before they have grown too old, frustrated and dispirited to give it.

Postal Savings

America's Poorest Buy Ralph Lee Smith

Few people can doubt the importance and magnitude of the problem that President Johnson's anti-poverty program is designed to meet. There is some question, however, as to whether the government has given much thought to the relation of certain existing programs and activities to the recently discovered problem of poverty. The Postal Savings System is a good example.

Congress created the Postal Savings System in 1910. It was a humane and progressive program, often overlooked in the catalogue of significant modern social legislation. The heart of the law was simply that local post offices would serve as savings depositories, *safe* savings depositories, backed and guaranteed by the government. It was not envisioned that Morgans and Vanderbilts would line up at the post-office window. One dollar would open an account, and the maximum allowed in any one account was \$2,500. Interest was established at 2% per annum, a decent return on savings in 1910.

It was for the poor and the disadvantaged that the program was principally designed. The farmer who did not live near a bank could save at the rural post office. In the cities thousands of immigrants, not

understanding the mysteries of commercial banks—or, perhaps, understanding them too well—feared to deposit money in them. The Postal Savings System, it was hoped, would bring these people's savings out of mattresses and books and get them into a safe savings system that would earn interest for the individuals and, at the same time, bring the hoarded money into circulation.

The program fulfilled and surpassed the greatest hopes of its creators. No Morgan or Vanderbilt is known to have opened an account. But sharecroppers in Alabama and sweatshop laborers in Brooklyn did. Literally millions of dollars came out of mattresses and books and were passed across the till at an institution that ordinary people trusted—the United States Post Office.

Although many people do not realize it, the Postal Savings System is still going strong. Two things about it have not changed since 1910. Most of the depositors are poor people—well within the criteria established for poverty by the President's advisers. And the interest is the same today as it was in 1910—2%.

Needless to say, these days a sophisticated investor won't touch Postal Savings. The interest is too low. He can get equivalent safety and twice the interest by depositing in a savings bank whose accounts

are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. The customers of the Postal Savings System, to put it as gently as possible, are people who don't know any better. This means the undereducated, the disadvantaged, the poor. The very people that the system was designed to help—and did help—in 1910, are victimized by it in 1964.

The money involved is far from negligible, either for the individual investor or in its aggregate sum. The 1962 Annual Report (latest available) of Operations of the Postal Savings System gives the total number of depositors as 1,271,858. These people have, in their accounts, a total of \$646 million. The average account, therefore, contains about \$508, in many cases accumulated over a period of many years, a few dollars at a time.

The distribution of depositors and the amount of their deposits by states is revealing. Massachusetts, for example, has a population of 5,234,000 and a per capita income of \$2,519. The number of Bay Staters who hold Postal Savings deposits is 13,969, and their deposits total \$10,080,131. Alabama's population, 3,302,000, and its per capita income, \$1,642, are both substantially less than those of Massachusetts. But Alabama has many more Postal Savings depositors—18,170. Despite their superior numbers, their deposits add up to only \$6,-

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514,413, much less than the Massachusetts total. Georgia shows a similar picture: with a population of 3,987,000 and a per capita income of \$1,608, it has 17,437 Postal Savings depositors whose deposits total \$7,890,227.

Florida, the state where many not very well-to-do people retire, has an immense number of small Postal Savings depositors. With a population of 5,222,000 and a per capita income of \$1,988, Florida has no fewer than 99,738 depositors, whose holdings total only \$19,771,122. California, with three times Florida's population and a per capita income of \$2,741, has fewer depositors—75,810—whose holdings nevertheless easily surpass those of Florida—\$32,137,575.

The point need hardly be labored. The uneducated and the poor have trustingly stuck with a system that

has forgotten them, just as nearly everyone else has forgotten them. The natural history of reform has run its full cycle. The program that was launched with intelligence and zeal ends in archaism and neglect, pointlessly continuing through bureaucratic inertia, and finally exacerbating the problems it was intended to solve.

What does the U. S. Government do with the \$646 million that more than a million Postal Savings depositors have put into its hands? The law provides that the government can lend it to commercial banks at a rate of interest not less than $2\frac{1}{4}\%$. In the old days, when the 2% that the system paid to its depositors was a good rate of interest, banks weren't interested in borrowing money at a rate as high as $2\frac{1}{4}\%$. They could get it more

cheaply elsewhere. As a result, until recently, most of the system's money was sunk into government bonds.

What is the present picture? When it has any money to offer to commercial banks, the Postal Savings System requires a minimum interest of $3\frac{1}{2}\%$. Banks are now delighted to get the money at that rate and practically line up to receive it. But the Postal Savings System doesn't have much to lend them. Most of its assets are still in government bonds.

What do the government bonds pay? Figures from the daily report on government bonds in a current copy of *The New York Times* show various Treasury issues paying interest ranging from 3.08% to 4.17%. All right. The system continues to pay 2%, but gets at least 3% and sometimes more than 4% on the money. This is a far greater "spread" than was envisioned by the framers of the legislation who pegged the depositors' interest at 2% and specified a rate of $2\frac{1}{4}\%$ for lending the system's money to banks. Uncle Sam now takes the investor's hard-earned pennies, transfers them from one hand to another, and quietly pockets as much as half the interest gained in the process.

Let us suppose, now, that interest on Postal Savings was raised from 2% to 3%, an absolute minimum increase to bring the system even within shouting distance of the reality of our times. This would mean an immediate annual increase of \$6,460,000 that Uncle Sam would be paying to Postal Savings depositors. An account with the maximum deposit of \$2,500—and there are many thousands of such full accounts held by low-income people who have built them up over three or four decades—would receive additional interest of \$25 per year. Even the average \$508 account would pick up about \$5 more a year—and anyone who thinks that \$5 is "nothing" has never been in the income bracket of many Postal Savings depositors.

As part of its war against poverty the Administration might well undertake a full review of the impact on the poor of its existing programs and activities. It might also step up its programs of consumer and investor education for lower-income families. On both counts, Postal Savings is a good place to start.



BOOKS AND THE ARTS

The Radical Innocent

Nelson Algren

Although *Time* magazine described Bruce Jay Friedman's *Stern* (Simon & Schuster, 1962) as a novel "in the tradition of the Jewish schlemiel story and the Charlie Chaplin movie," and its author as a Jewish protagonist, *Stern* was a satire too angry, a farce too anguished, ever to reach the American screen; *Stern* himself has precisely nothing to do with the legendary ghetto chump; and Friedman is not a Jewish protagonist.

In placing Friedman in the "The Whole World Looks Jewish When You're In Love" school of Norman Podhoretz and Gertrude Berg, *Time's* appraisers missed by a margin as wide as if they had identified LeRoi Jones with Uncle Remus. *Stern* is not about Jewishness; it is about un-Jewishness.

When the Seder began, Uncle Sweets would take long difficult passages to himself, which gave him an opportunity to hit high notes galore, but soon Uncle Mackie would break in with great clamor, doing a series of heroic-sounding but clashing chants that seemed to have been developed outdoors in Arizona. Uncle Sweets would stop and say to him, "What the hell do you know? You shit in your hat in Phoenix." And Uncle Mackie would fly at him, saying, "I'll kick your two-bit ass through the window."... And thus the curtain would come down on another religious holiday.

The time when the East 10th Street kitchen was a sanctuary that returned, by evening, the dignity lost in the day's humiliations, is past: and all the greenery of suburbia cannot bring it back. Indeed, a task force of caterpillars ravage *Stern's* suburban greenery as if they had been sent, while his neighbors' gardens bloom unblighted. Who sends caterpillars?

In his own country, *Stern* lives in a far-off land. Of his ancestral heritage nothing remains but an ancient shame. Neither his wife nor his father nor a friend speak to him as though he were related to them. Masterless dogs arrest him.

On the second night of the estate-crossing, it was not quite so dark as it was to be later on, and Stern was able to see two thin, huge dogs vault a fence and make for him with a whistling sound. They skinned

through the night and came to an abrupt halt at his feet, their gums drawn back, teeth white, both high above his waist. One took Stern's wrist between his teeth and the two animals, hugging close to his side, walked with him between them, as though they were guards taking a man to prison. He tried not to perspire, having heard you showed your fear that way. They walked him until the dog released his wrist, which was soaking wet; then both turned and went back, trotting swiftly through the night.

Friedman has nothing of the cleverness of Roth; he lacks Bellow's intellectualism altogether. Unlike Malamud, his people don't even have connections to a life of the past. Their severance is demonstrated by *Stern's* own hallucinatory progress. For he embodies not tradition but disorder, the disorder of the great city. And *Stern's* way marks the end of a time, for American multitudes, when each man belonged to the company of men. "Plunged in torment plunged in fire"—Friedman's sources, if he must be categorized, are nearer to those of Beckett than to his New York colleagues. His people were weak in the head when they came into the world. It is *Stern* who drags along at the end of Pozzo's rope. And when *Stern* enters the Grove Rest Home for the cure of an ulcer ("a hairy coarse-tufted little animal that squawked for nourishment") we are truly among those whose birth was astride a grave.

"A guy has to have freedom," a tall youth with flaring pimples assures *Stern* at Grove Rest, "the whole trouble with everything is there's always somebody stepping on your head when you're eating a bowl of kraut. You live, you live. You die, you die. Only thing I care about is old guys not pushing me around."

The difference between Friedman and Beckett is that while Beckett assigns a separate ash can to each of his characters, Friedman uses no props: his people simply live ash-can lives. Grove Rest itself is such a can, electrified and provided with cots,

Nelson Algren is presently writing a study of Hemingway to be published by G. P. Putnam's Sons.

through which time alternates not between day and night but between Pill-and-Bandage Time and Milk-and-Cookie Time.

The darkness was dropping swiftly; off in the distance were the blinking lights of a building that seemed to be set off by itself, deliberately isolated. Crowd sounds were coming from it, as though from a bleachers group that had remained long after the ball game... on the top step the half-man was waiting for him, a bandage around his neck. As Stern approached, he flung open his bathrobe and said, "Look what they did to me."

Stern has nothing to do with *The Rise of David Levinsky* and everything to do with the fall of Jack Ruby. His history puts the reader between Dostoevsky and Goldwater: between the Underground Man's warning that "We don't even know what living is now" and a summons "to come to the defense of Western Civilization, that noblest creation of the mind and heart of man."

The devastation of human values, adumbrated by Dostoevsky, is embodied at Grove Rest. When it's Pill-and-Bandage Time among the Porch People, we realize what the mind and heart of man has created. And this is accomplished in a comedy of such depth, in a farce of such savagery, that dramatization of Grove Rest would require the services of Bert Lahr and Dorothy Loudon. Yet Friedman employs the findings of modern analysis without making the reader feel he is in Group Therapy.

The satire is sustained in Friedman's second volume, *Far from the City of Class* (Farrar-Potter, 1963). In one of these stories, "A Foot in the Door," the author has adapted the Faustian legend to the burlesque stage, in a take-off of the values that propel *The Young Man on the Way Up*. Here the ambitious *petit-bourgeois*, Gordon, is seduced by his insurance man, Merz, into giving up his hair in return for Merz's word that Gordon's rival, in a race for office promotion, will be put out of the running. Gordon's hair falls out within a month, and the rival is shipped to Dubuque. As Gordon's gains in money and prestige increase, his emotional life is diminished until he has no love left in his life. Here Friedman has put the Biblical wisdom, that he who gains

his life must lose it, into fresh phrasing: "Beware of what you ask for—you may get it."

The same sense of loss, and of longing to belong, invests his current novel, *A Mother's Kisses* (Simon & Schuster). "Wait till you have to say hello to life," the 17-year-old Joseph's mother warns him, "have you got surprises coming. Take a look over your shoulder and see what's really coming."

Meg herself provides most of the surprises; and Joseph's greatest hope is to look over her shoulder and not see *her* coming. When she gets him accepted as a freshman at something called Kansas Land U., the boy thinks he's going to get away from her. But Meg puts colleges in the same category as sold-out musicals and jammed restaurants. She had gotten him into hit shows by having the management set up a kitchen chair in the aisle. She had broken lines waiting at restaurants by saying to the headwaiter, "I've got a hungry kid. Do you think you could do a little something, doll?" And, magically, a table would appear and Joseph would have to eat under the indignant view of standees. Now, when she starts packing perfumes into a valise, he asks, "Why are you packing? You're not going anywhere."

"I knew you'd start. If you make a fuss I'll kill you."

"But I don't want to go out there with a mother—I don't even know if you're allowed to have one out there."

Once arrived on campus and not another mother in sight, Joseph reminds her: "You said the place would be packed with mothers."

"Don't you think these kids would give their eyeteeth to have their mothers with them?"

Meg demands to know.

"I have to register tomorrow and school starts the next day. When are you going to leave?"

"I just want to get you set. I can't leave knowing you're in an excited condition like this."

She can't leave him at all. And the boy himself lacks the strength to cut the cord. Under his need to gain his manhood runs a current of fear of living without Meg near. Friedman's craft is in provoking laughter at the same time that the air grows murderous. Meg is simply a mother of such personal force that she is an affliction.

In his desperation to rid himself of her hold, Joseph reminds her of the uses to which she put him as a child. He brings up all the times she had

snatched him from deep midnight sleeps to sing *Prisoner of Love* for living room company.

"Who were those people that they were so important?" he wants to know now. "How do you think I felt singing at those hours, a little boy?"

And of how, the winter he had had chicken pox, she had whisked him along on her St. Petersburg vacation, hiding him in lower berths and telling conductors all he had was hives.

"I'll kill myself," is Meg's answer to that now, "and the son of a bitch remembered. Who knew it would develop such a mouth?"

"Was that guy downstairs up here tonight?" he finally presses her. "Did he get you on the bed and get your boobs out?"

"All right, now,"—Meg's patience is exhausted—"I let you recite, you had fun, now come over here fast, because if I don't get a kiss I'll tear your face off from your cuteness. Get down here with your lips or there'll be all-out war."

Yet, when he finally gets her on a train, he weakens and says, "Stay another few days"—then kisses her hair and walks back to the platform.

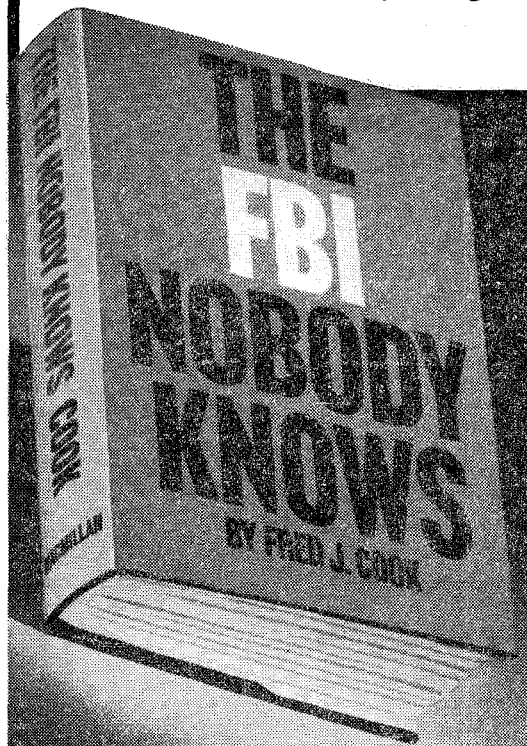
... when the train began to move he trotted alongside it until

he came to the end of the platform. Stopping there, he began to holler things at his mother, first softly, then at the top of his lungs, anything he wanted to: "What was the rush?" and "You're not great at all. I never enjoyed one second with you" . . . and kept on until the shriek of the engine no longer covered his words.

What makes Friedman more interesting than most of Malamud, Roth and Bellow is the sense he affords of possibilities larger than the doings and undoings of the Jewish urban bourgeois, which, after all, comprises but an infinitesimal aspect of American life. What makes him more important is that he writes out of the viscera instead of the cerebrum. What makes him more dangerous is that while they distribute prose designed by careful planning for careful living, Friedman really doesn't know what he's doing. "I can remember being inside Mommy," Stern's infant son tells him, "I knew about the Three Stooges in there."

Bruce Jay Friedman is that rarity, a compulsive writer whose innocence makes his flaws of greater value, ultimately, than the perfections of skilled mechanics.

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A Difficult Birth

THE LONG WALK HOME. By Leonard Kriegel. Appleton-Century. 213 pp. \$4.50.

Mel Rosenthal

Baldwin told us that we are all Negroes, Malamud that we are Jews. Kriegel's book about the mutilation he suffered from polio offers another metaphor for our condition: "What I discovered was that each mind held its own personal virus, as vicious and intemperate as the carrier of my polio." The metaphoric significance is earned, yet the power of this book stands by itself, in the brutal account it presents of a sensitive human being's battle against self-hate and self-pity. Kriegel takes us with him on his long walk back to humanity, the long march toward creating a self. In the process, he proves that he is an extremely talented writer. His style and the

quality of his introspection make this book a literary experience, one that transcends the usual reminiscences of sickness and survival. The particular way in which Kriegel mythifies himself and his experience places him in the center of a recent American artistic tradition.

The walk begins at a hospital he calls "The Rock," the New York State Reconstruction Home outside of West Point. He entered the Rock at the age of 11, with his legs dead and frozen into a 45-degree angle, a victim of a dread disease beyond his understanding. He was, too, a victim of the fear and guilt that is inculcated in an afflicted child by parents who see misfortune as punishment for unrecognized, unremembered sins. His proud impoverished Jewish parents too easily recognized the traditional visitation of punishment for the sins of the fathers, but

were unable to atone for their sins either to their young son or their God. The ambivalence of their attitude could not help but establish in the mind of a bewildered boy a connection between his disease and a failure in the sight of a God who was too stern to love and too ambiguous to hate.

A hint of psychic recovery came with the mobility a wheel chair gave him. The first day in the chair he went out of the hospital onto the road.

A squirrel ran across the road and I stopped, amazed at the clean rush of life. And, as suddenly as the final slant of sun on a winter afternoon, I knew that I was free and alive and I loved myself once again.

Wheels also offered a taste of that special liberation which comes from the exercise of power. Kriegel organized a cavalry charge of ten boys in wheel chairs into a nearby town. Sneaking out of the hospital at dusk, they wheeled a mile or so, coming at last to the top of a hill and dividing into two rows of five:

We lined the chairs up, making sure that there was enough room between each one. Then I wheeled to the front of my wave. Just before I raised my hand in the air to signal the charge, I noticed that the front yards of the houses facing the road contained chickens and I dropped my hand, hearing Willie's rather hoarse imitation of a bugle as I began down the hill.

Bent low in the chair, my hands loosely fingering the wheel rims, I felt as if I were falling into something deep. And I wanted so much to fall because falling struck me then as the most beautiful of all possibilities. The wind seemed to fold against my body, as if space were opening for me alone. As I went rapidly past one of the houses, I caught a glimpse of an old woman standing on the porch, her face vapid with terror and disbelief. When I hit the bottom of the hill, I took the turn fast and clean, spinning rapidly around to come to a sudden halt after I had gone around twenty feet into the street. Then I saw Willie take the turn, leaning over to his left, just enough to tilt the chair slightly and take it on two wheels. I envied Willie his style, but I was much too happy with myself to feel that for more than a second.

Townspeople, the awed Enemy, stood in suspicious huddles across the street. Disdainfully, he led his

After a Tale from Hoffman

a last look where you are sleeping
surely sleeping and such a stern
unspeaking mouth
a mouth of shell
a cave of syllable made heart
a voice speaking low
in rooms of night
surely sleeping in
your image of singular creatures,
ourselves, silhouettes navigating
balconies, describing the surface of
craters, dangling a musical nothing
in a glass
:there where you are sleeping
sleeping beloved inside the burned
opal walls, there where we saw
the sacred wedding, suspended before
a reverent congregation
smiling as sorrow-
lines became notation merely
drawn from outmoded times
:there where you are sleeping
with your opaque eyes as if drugged
beneath the discs of windows
too high from the ground
beneath the fringe
of leaves like eyelids
hiding what I do not understand,
where all is facsimile
a lost dimension
a place
of waiting stones.

Paula Hocks

We've been running "pieces of the action" like these in issues of The Nation.

"Mop Tops"

"Beatlemania has been pegged, by the sociologically inclined, as a protest against the adult world, but the grownups have it backward: the Beatle appeal is positive, not negative. They give kids a chance to let off steam and adults a chance to let off disapproval."

From a recent Newsweek Music column.

"Play it Cool"

"Throughout his five years in office, de Gaulle has ruled like a benevolent despot. He is the twentieth century's greatest, and perhaps only true, disciple of Machiavelli—telling one thing to one visitor, the opposite to another, and playing the first off against the second."

From a recent Newsweek story.

"...a therapeutic rape..."

"This part of the entertainment is bathed in a slurping sentimentality which gives way to outlandish violence when the nurse counterattacks. In fast order, one of her victimized patients cuts his throat, ol' Mac tries to treat her to a therapeutic rape, is condemned to a prefrontal lobotomy, then smothered to death by a friend to save him from a vegetable existence. Only the audience is worse served."

From a recent Newsweek Theater column.

"The Good Non-Life"

"For breakfast he has non-caffeine coffee, meatless sausage, and the day's first nicotine-free cigarette. At the office he sits behind a non-working desk—a drawerless, paper-free form intended to look like a coffee table. At home his wife has her wig, her false eyelashes, and her suntan from a bottle. His children are in school echoing the latest homilies of the teacherless teaching machine. After class his daughter practices the current non-dance, an over-all tremor requiring no movement of the feet. This is today's surrogate world, where a man can have his cake substitute (made without butter) and eat it too."

From a recent Newsweek column.

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men to a candy store to claim the spoils of war. Negotiating with the owner (who was afraid to let them in because they had "germs") Kriegel "decided to appeal to his 'We're just a group of poor unfortunates' side." With the help of the police, they got their candy, and Kriegel began to evaluate himself on the basis of new-found abilities, including an ambiguous talent for manipulation.

"At the Rock I matched myself with my fate and met the time of my trial." But at the New York State Reconstruction Home, to be crippled was to be normal. When he left, he had to use crutches if he was to move around. All they provided for

his soft fat body was pain and a sense of shame. The real test was beginning. He put it off, hiding his hate and guilt in his room in the Bronx, where in the recesses of his mind he built up a network of myths and dreams as a bulwark against experience. The bulwark crumbled one day with the meeting of a Spaulding and a broomstick. Watching his brother play stickball, the brutal fact came home: "... the myths dropped away forever, to die permanently in a sudden burst of anguish and despair. *Because I was a cripple.* Not a ball player, not a hero, not a lover, not even an adolescent. But a cripple. Nothing but a cripple. . . . I began to shiver, my body seized by a paroxysm of self-pity." The self-pity turned to hate and a hard, dry rage. The world that he thought had forced him to live in myth and guilt became the enemy, a giant nebulous "*they*" that could only be beaten with muscle and will. So he began to exercise hour after hour, building the upper half of his body into an instrument of revenge. But that instrument became instead another means toward selfhood.

"All I wanted was to act, to feel *my body, my arms*, responding to the demands I made. . . . I had to protect the growing self within me, to nurture the awakening power of my body, to break through all the old possibilities my imagination had offered into the promise of real selfhood. To be! That was it. I had to be." What? The crippled hero! He began to read Hemingway and his bible was *The Sun Also Rises*. He, too, was broken but good, virile in his impotence, loyal only to a meretricious myth of self, aloof and alone in a corrupt world. Just as it did for a generation before him, the Hemingway hero provided Kriegel with a viable life style. It led to living a lie. "It . . . denied me the right or ability to love. . . . For the world as enemy is an even greater lie than the world as lover."

Harriet, his wife, crippled the myth of his cripple forever by forcing him "to admit to the reality of feeling, feeling that had nothing to do with being crippled or walking on crutches, feeling that went far beyond the self-consciously stoic 'screw it' that I paraded for my peers and myself." Perhaps this is where the book becomes weakest; the material might have lent itself more effectively to

The New Money

Metapontum

coin

with the blade

of barley

in thanks

to that prosperity

which is its own

power

of exchange

Nearby

on a weighed-down

leaf

a mouse is

looking at it.

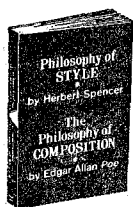
Robert Kelly

the techniques of fiction. The book ends with Kriegel in his senior year at college, the hate gone, standing on the verge of an existence he had won. "At the cost of legs," he tells us, "I had won a self" and a style that is in many ways the mirror of a generation.

If Hemingway's fiction was a paradigm for the lost generation, Kriegel is characteristic of a new generation that takes its wounds seriously, with no glamour and little pride. The prose is tough and muscular, but it is also heavily dependent on metaphor: each experience must be carefully analyzed, and its implications carefully considered, before it is recorded in the diary of self. Each object, its color and texture, is put in a moral order. "For yellow was the color of the sky of late-summer twilights and the color of the bone chips they took from the osteoed right hip of Burp Burp." Everything that reflects or can be made to reflect self is morally significant, and the final value of an object or an experience depends on whether or not it nourishes self.

To be isolated is to atrophy. Like Henderson and Cass Kinsolving, his spiritual prototypes in recent American fiction, Leonard Kriegel makes it home alone. But the hard-won sense of self must be fused with a sense of community. How this can be done, given the nature of modern society, is the question of our time. Mr. Kriegel does not answer the question, but then neither has Bellow or Styron.

Mel Rosenthal is a free-lance writer currently working on a study of liberal magazines since the thirties.



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A Critic's Credo (II)

Harold Clurman

Recently I was introduced to a gentleman as a person about to stage a new play. "What do you think of it?" I was asked. "It's a good play," I answered. "Ah, I notice you are careful not to say it's *great*," he remarked.

I then explained that in the history of the theatre from Aeschylus to Axelrod there were probably less than a hundred plays I would call indisputably great. Not all of Euripides, Shakespeare, Molière, Ibsen or Chekhov is great. Shaw, Pirandello, O'Neill, Brecht, Beckett, Genet are important but I hesitate to call them great.

The use of the designation, needless to say, depends on one's frame of reference. If one believes a play may retain its efficacy for, let us say, fifty years, one may reasonably call it great—though that is not the yardstick by which I measure. In contemporary American theatre criticism the word has come to signify gushing enthusiasm, as similarly indicated by such a phrase as "the best play of several seasons." With us, the superlative is largely an implement of first aid to the box office.

Our theatre and its status among us are in such a sorry plight that when a reviewer labels a play "good" or "interesting," we take it to mean mediocre—hardly worth the expense of seeing it. Only a "money notice" is considered a favorable review—something having at least the force of a full-page newspaper ad. Criticism in such an atmosphere is perilously difficult. Theatre managers who complain about the reviewers do not want criticism; they want praise verging on hysterics. This generally holds true for playwrights and actors as well.

The reaction on the part of some critics to this journalistic inflation is to reverse the process: to preserve their critical chastity they assume an attitude of absolute severity. They will have nothing but the "best"; they insist on "the highest standards." One cannot be too extreme, they feel, in defense of Excellence.

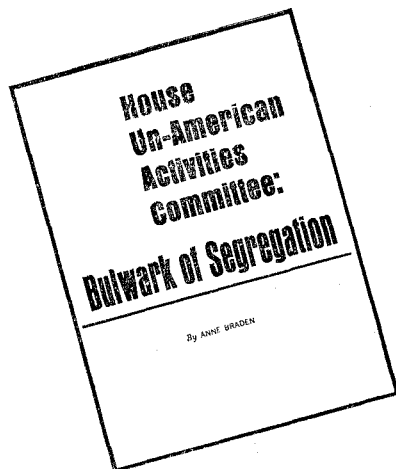
Such a posture strikes me as no less false than the promiscuity of those addicted to raving about any presentation that can decently be commended at all. For while some absolute standard must be latent in the critic's mind if he is to give any play its proper place, it is not at all necessary or desirable to judge every new play on the basis of that ideal.

There is even something inimical to art in such a practice.

"Masterpieces," says Auden, "should be kept for High Holidays of the Spirit." That is certainly not to deny that we need organizations to keep masterpieces perennially in view. But what we must demand above all in plays is that they *speak* to us, stir us in ways which most intimately and powerfully stir our senses and our souls, penetrate to the core what is most truly alive in us. To do so plays do not have to have the stamp of universality on them, of impeccable inspiration, or signs of top-flight genius. They have to be the consistent and persuasive expression of genuine perception, individual in origin, social in application. If Aeschylus, Shakespeare, Molière are prototypes of dramatic greatness, it must be evident that many second, third, fourth and fifth-rate plays may also fulfill the function of usable art.

It is no special feat to determine greatness retrospectively. The critic who implies that nothing less than the absolutely first-rate will do is usually more pedant than artist. Immortality awards are best conferred by our descendants. "A 'high standard,'" said Henry James, "is an excellent thing, but we fancy it sometimes takes away more than it gives." We live more fully on what we create now than on what was created for us in the past. That is as true for audiences as for the makers and doers.

Since we are speaking of the total phenomenon of the theatre, rather than of drama alone, we must remind ourselves that masterpieces badly produced or produced at the wrong time and place cease to occupy their exalted position; in fact they no longer serve the purposes of art. Under the proper circumstances, on the stage and in the auditorium, plays of more modest literary pretensions may excel them. I am often given to understand that Sophocles was a greater dramatist than O'Neill. I need no such instruction. It is none the less true that most productions of Sophocles (and of other Greek masters) have struck me as singularly empty, while certain O'Neill staged plays have impressed me deeply. To make this crushingly clear, on a recent radio program I informed the manager who sponsored both the 1964 Broadway *Hamlet* and *Beyond*



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the *Fringe* that I believed the latter contained the greater artistic value.

We have also learned that some dramatists of unquestioned stature—Goethe, Kleist, Racine, Strindberg—do not have the same impact in one country as in another, or make the impression they presumably should, even upon their own people at all times.

Talent of every kind, even small talent, must always be credited. That is particularly so of talent close to us in time and place. I do not suggest that we follow Herman Melville's injunction: "Let America first praise mediocrity in her children before she praises . . . the best excellence in children of other lands." I submit, however, that a sense of the present and of presence are factors which it is unwise to overlook or underestimate. But the critical faculty does not consist only in recognizing talent; there must be also an ability to evaluate it. The American theatre is richly supplied (I almost said lousy) with talent, but too often talent not worthy enough or put to the best uses.

This raises an aspect of theatre criticism in which we are decidedly at fault. Our praise is usually the response to an effect, a register of stimulation. We applaud the person who produces the effect in an acclaim which ranges from a compliment to cleverness to the proclamation of genius. But what counts in talent is its specific gravity, its meaning, how and in what way it affects us, the human nourishment it offers us. Cyanide of potassium is tremendously effective, but it is not food.

Everything—even the damnable—must be expressed in the theatre. I cannot hold anything to be true unless tested by its opposite. I need Beckett's negations if for no other reason than that they fortify me in my affirmations. I need Genet's "decadence" to sustain my health. I embrace the madness in certain modern dramatists to find my balance. To be sure, there is authentic "far out" writing and there is its fashionable simulacrum; it is the critic's task to distinguish between them. He must sift the stuff which composes each particular talent, assess its value for and in itself, and in relation to himself as a person representative of a certain public. "Entertainment," "good theatre," "beauty" are not enough. We must know what these virtues actually do, how they work. The critic's main job, I repeat, is not to speak of his likes or dislikes as pleasure or distaste

alone, but to define as exactly as possible the nature of what he examines. It were best to do this without the use of tags intended for quotes to be read on the run.

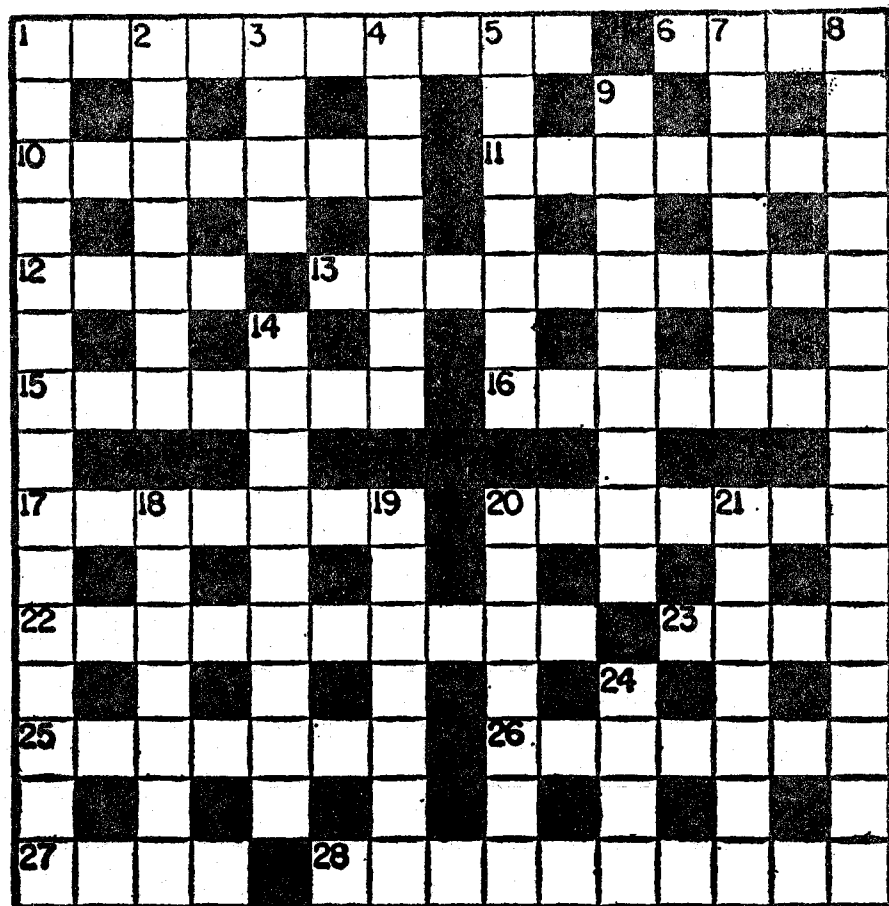
What I have said about the judgment of texts applies equally to acting and to those other ingredients which go into the making of a play in the theatre. ("To see sad sights," Shakespeare tells us, "moves more than to hear them told / For the eye interprets to the ear. . .") Most criticism nowadays is even more meager in regard to acting, direction and design than in evaluation of the texts themselves. Merit in acting is weighed chiefly by the degree of personal appeal it exercises. The actor is rarely judged for his relevance to the play as a whole since the play's meaning to begin with is frequently unspecified. To speak to the point about acting, the critic must judge the texture and composition of the role as the player shapes it through his natural endowment and through the authority of his craft.

Perhaps critics should not be held to too-strict account for neglect or oversight in the matter of acting, direction, etc., since most acting and direction on our stage today, for reasons we must refrain from entering into in the present context, is rarely better than competent. In such cases a consideration "in depth" becomes supererogatory when it is not pretentious. Still, even with actors as eminent as Laurence Olivier, Alfred Lunt, Paul Scofield, Jean-Louis Barrault, or with directors as accomplished as Tyrone Guthrie, Peter Brook, Orson Welles, what our critics have to say usually comes down to little more than catch phrases, a bleat of unreserved enthusiasm or regretted disapproval. In this connection I must cite a fact first called to my attention by Jacques Copeau, the actor-director who strongly influenced Louis Jouvet, Charles Dullin and a whole generation of European theatre folk from 1913 to 1941: there have been fewer *great* actors in the history of the theatre than great dramatists.

The new season begins; and no doubt I shall often make hash in my columns of many of my own prescriptions. In extenuation I can only urge that while I am not sure I agree with an admirable literary critic I heard lecture many years ago in Paris who said, "The artist has every right; a critic only obligations," I always bear it in mind.

Crossword Puzzle No. 1072

By FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

- 1 Certainly not the main way that some people travel. (4, 6)
- 6 Business is obviously sound at this time. (4)
- 10 Hold a pistol on Mr. Eliot? The game started from such places, perhaps. (7)
- 11 How to prevent rust? It might have made money for someone. (3, 4)
- 12 The number of sides on a diamond? (4)
- 13 An uncertain income isn't right for one who knows all about everything. (10)
- 15 How automobile men got started? Their holdings are usually framed, and 19 down Assume authority? (4, 3, 7)
- 17 What one sometimes does with iron ingot without having to, on return. (7)
- 20 Chief product of the sea, cool but not unruffled. (7)
- 22 One certainly wouldn't speak for faulty record tape. (10)
- 23 So-called generation of disturbed 24. (4)
- 25 In part, one might be too expansive to do so. (7)
- 26 He calls possibly for a coat to put on. (7)
- 27 Does wrong, but may be taken to improve one. (4)
- 28 It might be bobbed occasionally,

but shouldn't be the one originally connected with sin. (5, 5)

DOWN:

- 1 It offers little time, Junior, to take cover! (Only adults can enter it.) (6, 9)
- 2 A person who might have a good jack-knife about in one might find you well. (7)
- 3 The kind to arrange? (4)
- 4 One who looks up and around to put two and two together? One goes on so! (7)
- 5 One is likely to be very self-conscious. (7)
- 7 Favorite subject of 5. (7)
- 8 Not an army hanger-on—he's more diplomatic. (8, 7)
- 9 Register a complaint, perhaps—it should be worth a few points. (5, 4)
- 14 Gilbert implied he had a lot that made him unhappy. (9)
- 18 There's little work to what one has to do to the 17, to hold down the answer. (7)
- 20 Animal ring I can put on, as Caesar saw it. (7)
- 21 What clapboard does in place of the napkin. (7)
- 24 Wager a star might make. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1071

ACROSS: 1 Cross sections; 10 Incas; 11 Past tense; 12 Sinecures; 13 and 24 Watertight; 14 Green peppers; 19

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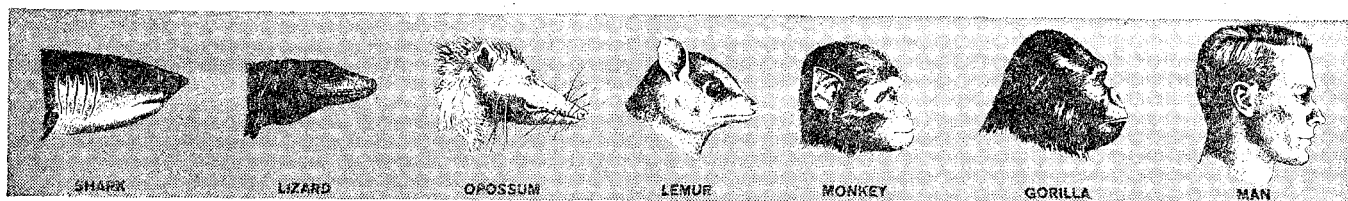
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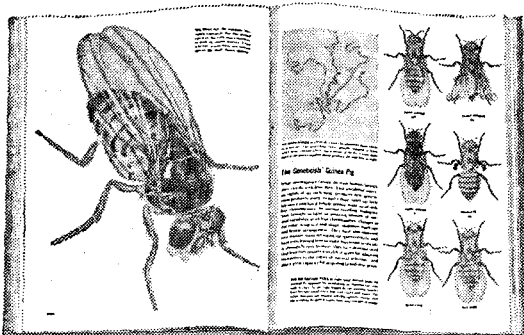
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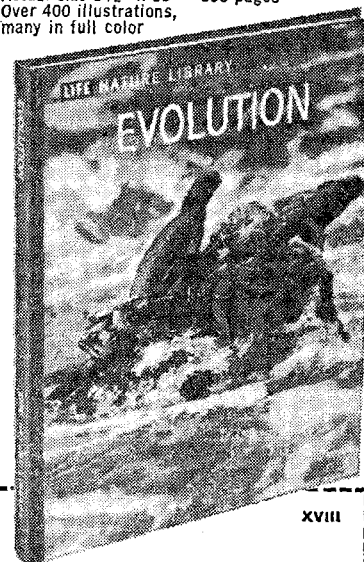
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